ALABAMA BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MINUTES

OF THE

Fourth Annual Session

OF THE

New River Baptist Association,

HELD WITH

SHADY GROVE CHURCH,

FIRST DISTRICT.

Fayette County, Ala.,

Saturday, Sunday and Monday, October 17, 18 and 19, 1874.

FAYETTE C. H., ALA.:
PRINTED AT THE "WATCHMAN" OFFICE,
1874.

MINUTES.

SATURDAY, Oct. 17, 1874.

The congregation having assembled at the stand at 11 o'clock a. m., brother E. T. Akin preached the Introductory Sermon, from Rom. 8, 28: "And we know that all things work together for good, to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

2. After an hour's intermission and some refreshments, the delegates assembled in the meeting-house, and the Association was opened with prayer by the Moderator.

3. Called for the letters from the churches, which, being presented, were read and the names of delegates enrolled. (See Statistical Table)

4. Proceeded to the election 0f Moderator and Clerk, whereupon were chosen B. V. Shirley, Moderator, and H. M. Bell, Clerk.

5. Opened the door for reception of other churches, whereupon were regularly (see Art. 6 Con.) received the following: Concord and Oak Grove, for list of whose delegates, see Statistical Table.

6. Invited ministering brethren not delegates to seats with us.

7. Appointed the following committees:

Preaching—J. M. Dodson, T. Harris, W. H. Brasher, together with the Pastor and Deacons of Shady Grove church.

Arrangement of Business—J. C. Jones, J. E. Bell, J. B. Huckabee, and E. T. Akins.

Documents—J. B. Ferguson, G. W. Gravlee and G. J. Collins.

Sabbath School—A. A. Smith, J. M. Spann, and G. W. Lawrence.

Temperance—W. B. Melton, T. H. Davis and E. D. Rushing.

Nomination—W. B. Shirley, L. C. Kelly and J. W. White.

Circular Letter—J. B. Huckabee, E. T. Akins and L. C. Shirley.

Finance—W. G. Baker, E. L. Westbrooks, W. B. Taylor and W. B. Melton.

8. The committee on Preaching reported: That Eld. L. B. Harbin preach to-night; Sabbath School mass-meeting to-morrow morning at 9 o'clock, a. m., Elder J. B. Huckabee to preach at 1 o'clock. p. m. The Association then adjourned to meet 8½ o'clock Monday morning. Prayer by Elder J. B. Huckabee.

SUNDAY, Oct. 18th.

9. Sabbath School mass-meeting in the morning opened by Elder J. B. Auckabee, when the subject of Sabbath Schools was appriately presented in its various important bearings, by Elders L. B. Harbin, J. B. Hubkabee, B. V. Shirley and J. E. Bell. Brother J. C. Jones preached at 11 o'clocked from last clause 4th verse, 12 chap. Dan.:—"Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." Eld. J. B. Huckabee preached in the afternoon from Mat. 6, 10: "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven."—Brethren A. A. Smith and E. L. Westbrooks preached at night.

MONDAY, Oct. 19.

According to adjournment, the Association met, and was opened with prayer by Elder J. C. Jones.

10. By motion authorized the Moderator to appoint the following committees:

Religious Literature.—J. E. Bell, J. B. Huckabee, and J. B. Ferguson.

Home or Domestic Mission.—E. T. Akins, J. C. Jones and D. G. Kirkland.

11. The report of committee on arrangement of business was received and adopted, as follows: (1) Read Constitution, Articles of Faith and Rules of Decorum; (2) Call names of delegates and mark absentees; (3) Call for correspondence; (4) Return correspondence; (5) Call for report of committee on documents; (6) Call for report of committee on circular letter; (7) Call for report of district meetings; (8) Call for report of committee on nomination; (9) Call for report of committee on Sabbath school; (10) Call for report of committee on temperance; (11) Call for report of Executive committee; (12) Call for report of Treasurer; (13) Appoint a Treasurer; (14) Call for report of committee on finance; (15) Call for report of committee on religious literature; (16) Call for report of committea on domestic missions; (17) Call for miscellaneous business.

J. C. JONES, Chairman.

12. By motion invited brother T. J. Tucker, from Hopewell church, to participate in the counsels of the body.

13. Called for correspondence and

received from North River Association a letter and package of Minutes, by her messenger, L. B. Harbin. From Tuscaloosa, a letter and package of Minutes by her messenger, Jno. Davis, to whom were extended the right hand of fellowship by the Moderator, who cordially invited them to the counsels of our body.

14. Returned correspondence by appointing Messengers as follows: To North River Association, J. B. Ferguson, J. B. Huckabee, E. T. Akins, W. H. Brasher, E. L. Westbrooks, M. L. Parks and B. V. Shirley. To Tuscaloosa, Elds. J. E. Bell and B. V. Shirley, and brethren Willis Davis and L. C. Shirley. To Yellow Creek, Elds. J. B. Huckabee, B. V. Shirley and E. T. Akins, and brethren G. W. McDonald, W. H. Long, C. M. Weeks, J. M. Dodson, S. W. Moss, Avery Kidd and D. G. Kirkland. To Union, Elder J. C. Jones and brother H. M. Bell.

15. By motion made it the duty of the Clerk to prepare a Letter of Correspondence to the several Associations with whom we correspond, with a view to have the same printed with the Minute.

16. Received and adopted report of committee on documents, as follows:—We, your committee on documents, beg leave to report, having examined all the documents placed in our hands, find nothing demanding your special attention. Respectfully submitted,

J. B. Ferguson, Chm'n.

17. Received and adopted report of committee on Circular Letter, as follows: We, your committee to examine the Circular Letter, submit the following:—We carefully examined the Circular Letter, and most heartily recommend the reading and adoption of the same. Respectfully submitted,

J. B. Huckabee, Chm'n.

18. After the reading of the Circular Letter the same was adopted and ordered to pe published with the Minute.

19. Called for and received report of District Meetings, as follows: 1st Dist. to be held with New Bethel church, commencing on Friday before the 3rd Sabbath in August, 1875, Elder N. J. Dyer to preach the Introductory Sermon, on the practical duties of christians, J. C. Jones, alternate; J. E. Bell, to preach at 11 o'clock Sunday, on the setting up of the visible church. Subjects for discussion Saturday morning: "What are the Scriptural duties of Deacons," opened by D. G. Kirkland and A. F. Bell. Saturday evening, "What is the proper observance of the Sabbath, and why have the churches adopted monthly meetings instead of every Sabbath, as was the pratice of the primitive churches?" Opened by G. J. Collins and H. M. Bell.

2d Dist. Meeting.—Appointed that the next session of the Association be held with Macedonia church, Walker county; District Meeting to be held with Mt. Lebanon church, commencing on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1875, Elder J. B. Ferguson to preach the Introductory Sermon. E. L. Westbrooks, alternate.—Elder B. V. Shirley to preach on Sunday at 11 o'clock, on the doctrine of election; J. E. Bell, alternate; Elder E. T Akins at 2 o'clock Sunday, on final perseverance of the saints, J. C. Jones, alternate. 1st subject for discussion on Saturday morning, "Who are the proper subjects of baptism, and who may properly partake of the Lord's Supper?" Opened by Elders B. V. Shirley and E. T. Akins. 2nd subject Saturday evening: "What are the relative duties of Pastors to churches, and churches to Pastors?" Discussion opened by Elds. J. B. Ferguson and A. A. Smith.

20. Received and adopted report of committee on nominations, as follows: We, your committee on nominations beg leave to submit the following: Eld J. B. Huckabee to preach the Introductory Sermon, Eld N. J. Dyer, alternate; Elder B. V. Shirley to preach at 11 o'clock Sunday, on the subject of Missions, Elder J. E. Bell, alternate; after which to take up collection. Eld. J. C. Jones to write Circular Letter.

W. B. Shirley, Chm'n.

21. Received and adopted report of committee on Sabbath Schools, as follows: We, your committee on Sabbath Schools, beg leave to submit the following: After partially considering the subject, we find it one of magnitude, both in consequence of its importance and fearful responsibility; notwithstanding the above facts, we find that there seems to be almost universal apathy on the part of the brotherhood upon this important subject.—We would therefore recommend that each church at once organize a Sabbath School; that the Association request a full report of S. S. from the churches in their next communications to this body. We would further recommend that a S. S. Board of 3 or 5 be appointed by this body now, to take the subject

under special care during the coming year, to hold their meetings quarterly, or as they may think necessary—raise funds, &c. We also recommend that, if funds can be raised, a S. S. Evangelist be employed to visit each church as early as possible, in the interest of S. Schools. All of which is respectfully submitted. A. A. SMITH, Chm'n.

22. In compliance with the recommendation of committee on S. Schools, the following brethren were appointed to constitute a S. S. Board, viz: J. B. Huckabee, G. W. Gravlee, J. E. Bell, D. G. Kirkland and E. T. Akins.

23. Received and adopted report of committee on Temperance, as follows: We, your committee on Temperance, ask leave to report: We find that Intemperance is one of the greatest evils that has ever existed in the human family; that it has caused more deaths, brought more trouble, deprivations of property, happiness and friends, and at last has robbed many thousands of their souls. Men may think as our mother Eve did when she eat the forbidden fruit, that there is but little or no harm in the cup of intoxicating liquors, that they are their own masters and will freely indulge; but alas for them, they are soon slaves to the bottle; and further, it unfits them for all moral end religious duties. Notwithstanding the above facts, many who profess to love Jesus, even some who occupy high positions in life, freely use the intoxicating beverage, and they by yielding their fearful and baleful influence over the rising generation, lead many to irretrievable woe.—We would recommend that all men would abstain from all intemperance, either in eating or drinking; it being abundantly forbidden by the word of God. All of which is respectfully submitted. W. E. MELTON, Chm'n.

24. Received and adopted report of Executive committee, as follows: We, your committee, beg leave to report that we have had but one meeting that there was a quorum present. The churches, owing to the tightness of money matters, paid over no money for us to operate with, therefore we done nothing towards employing a missionary. We would suggest that if the churches could pay a small sum, so as to supply about two Sabbath appointments, per month, during the summer season, there could be good effected. All of which is humbly submitted. D. G. KIRKLAND, Chm'n.

25. Appointed the following brethren to constitute an Executive Committee for the next year, viz: W. F. Kirkland, M. R. Barnett, W. B. Melton, H. M. Bell and W. B. Shirley.

26. Received and adopted report of Treasurer, as follows: On hand Associational fund of 1872, $ 3 80

Rec'd of finance com.

1873 Minute fund,	22 95
Associational fund,	13 65
	$40 30
Pd. for prnt'g Minutes, $22 95	
Pd. Clerk by order As'n, 10 00	
$32 95	32 95
Leavn'g on hand Assn'l fund,	$ 7 50

H. M. BELL, Treasurer.

27. Re-appointed H. M. Bell, Trs'r.

28. Received report of Finance committee, as follows: We, your committee on Finance, beg leave to report,

Received for Minutes,	$27 95
Associational purposes,	14 45
Total.	$42 40

W. G. BAKER, Chm'n.

29. Agreed to take recess until 2 o'clock p. m., and at 2 o'clock re-assembled for business.

30. Received, and after some comment in the way of approbating the recommendations of committee, adopted report of committee on Religious Literature, as follows: We, your committee on Religious Literature, report the following: We recognize the importance of our people becoming acquainted with the distinguishing principles of the Baptist family, which many distinguished brethren are endeavoring to set forth, in books, tracts, periodicals and newspapers. We recommend to this Association the importance of a sound and well conducted Baptist paper, and first of the list would mention, and even urge the use of our own paper, "The Alabama Baptist;" next to that, "The Baptist," by Elder J. R. Graves; also, the "Baptist Year Book." And for Books, Tracts, &c., we would refer your minds to the "Sothwestern Publishing Company," Memphis, Tennessee, where good Religious Literature may be obtained. We would further urge the necessity of the membership procuring and studying the History of the Baptist, by Orchard. We do not ask the brethren to use this literature in preference to the Word of God, but as aids to its study. Respect-

fully submitted, J. E. Bell, Chm'n.

31. Received, and after some appeals in behalf of the subject matter of the report, adopted the report of committee on Home or Domestic Missions, as follows: The committee on Home or Domestic Missions, report that upon investigation that northeast of this body there is destitution, not occupied by the Baptist; also south of us there is a considerable destitution, claiming the attention of the Baptist. We therefore recommend this body to take action by subscription, one-half to be paid first of March, 1875, the other half at the next session of this body. All of which is respectfully submitted.

E. T. AKINS, Chairman.

32. In compliance with recommendation of committee on Home Mission, an amount of more than one hundred dollars was subscribed by the brethren present.

33. By motion it was agreed that J. F. Lanneau be allowed to advertise his school on the back of this Minute.

34. By motion ordered that the Clerk have as many Minutes printed as the minute fund will procure, reserve the usual number for correspondence, and receive for his services $10 out of the Associational fund.

35. By motion directed that the Treasurer pay what fund was in his hands to the delegates to the State Convention.

36. Elected by ballot two delegates to represent us in the State Convention, viz: Elds. J. E. Bell and B. V. Shirley.

37. The following resolution being offered, was unanimously adopted:—Resolved, That the thanks of this body are due and are hereby tendered to Shady Grove church, and vicinity, for their kindness and hospitality to us during the present session.

38. Read and corrected Minute.

39. Received and adopted as a letter of correspondence to the several Associations with whom we correspond.—(See appendix A.)

40. Adjourned to meet with Mecedonia Church, in Southwest corner of Walker county, near Kelly's Store, on the Byler Road, on Saturday before the 3rd Sabbath in October, 1875. Prayer by L. B. Harbin, after which the brethren sung a hymn and took the parting hand. B. V. SHIRLEY, Mod'r.

H. M. Bell, Clerk.

(Appendix A.)

Corresponding Letter.

Fayette County, Ala.,
October 19th, 1874.

The New River Baptist Association:—

To her several sister Associations with whom she may correspond, sendeth greeting: Dear Brethren—We are now in session and progressing harmoniously. We feel that our field for work is apparent and abundant, and we thank God that at least some, yea a goodly number of our membership are becoming awakened to a sense of their obligation and responsibility. Brethren pray for us, that each and every member of the several churches of which we are made up, may put to a helping hand, in all things lawful and expedient, so that all the good possible for us to effect, as instrumentality, may be accomplished, to the glory of God. Brethren, we were, and hope to continue to be, glad to meet your messengers with letters and Minutes. We have appointed to represent us in your several bodies, our worthy brethren whose names appear in this Minute. Our next session will convene with Macedonia Church, in southwest edge of Walker county, near Kelly's Store, on the Byler Road.

B. V. SHIRLEY, Mod'r.
H. M. Bell, Clerk.

Circular Letter.

Dear Brethren:—I call your attention to Christian Consecration as the subject for the present letter; the importance and lack of which, is at once seen by all who carefully look over the cause of God in our land.

Consecration is the act of separating from a common to a sacred use. Christian consecration is their entire devotion to God's service. A Christian is a true follower of Christ, who has been redeemed from the power of sin and death by the blood of Christ—had his sins forgiven—brough- out of darkness into the light of God's dear children—become a fellow-citizen with the saints, and an heir of God, and a joint heir with the Lord Jesus Christ.

My dear brethren, does these characteristics apply to you? Have you been thus blessed, and are you thus highly favored? Has God done all these things for you, and more? Is He your hope and strength? Can you claim Him as your Father, Jesus Christ

as your Savior? If so, let us consider together the duty of consecration to our Lord and Savior, of both soul and body; which the Apostle Paul says, "is our reasonable service." See Rom. 12, 1. Let us remember that we are not our own, neither is what we have our own only as stewards. I Cor. 4, 1 and 2, and 1 Pet. 4, 10. We are His, soul and body, (I Cor. 6, 20.) and should serve Him in body and soul. God is a spirit, and they that worship Him, must worship Him in spirit and truth. John 4, 24. Men must worship God with more than lip service. Matt. 15, 8. The first and great commandment is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, soul and mind." Matt. 22, 37 and 38. Jesus Christ said, "If ye love me keep my commandments." The christian assumes all this responsibility.—Fearful thought! yet true. And he who claims to be a christian and has never given up all for the service of Christ, is mistaken. For he that forsaketh not all and taketh his cross, cannot be my deciple. Matt. 10, 37 and 37. Christ and His cause shall be the greatest desire in each of his servants.—"Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." These times call especially for devoted, consecrated Christians; and yet how great the lack of this spirit among the ministry, and private members of churches also. The minister should give himself wholly to his work. But does he do this? No, verily, they are entangled with the things of the world about as much as others; while their high calling is made a thing of secondary importance. He feels obliged to devote most of his time to procuring a living for himself and family. For this state of things, however, the minister is not altogether responsible. But it shows a lack of consecration upon the part of Deacon and private members of churches. Now, if the minister cannot give himself entirely to preaching, yet he should be consecrated to his work; and thus follow the example of Paul, who was "Always bearing about in the body, the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in his body." I Cor. 4, 10.—He is to be servant of all—to become all things to all men for their salvation. He should study the word of God, and also, human nature. Thus he may know himself and be prepared to adapt his instruction to the minds of others. He should be wise as serpents, as well as harmless as does. In short, the minister ought so to employ his time and talents as best to promote his ministerial work, for—

'Tis not so small a part,
The preacher's work demands:
But might fill an Angel's heart,
And fill a Savior's hands.

He cannot do too much for the Master; his zeal, however, should always be tempered with knowledge. There seems to be great lack of consecration upon the part of Deacons; some of whom seem to misapprehend their duties, while most, if not all, are doing very little as Deacons. They might help the minister a great deal, and relieve and encourage the poor in their respective churches; and thus bear their part in the great work Christ left for His people to do. But every believer ought to be consecrated to the Lord; for all belong to Him, and it is expected that they render constant service to Him. Their prayer should be, "Thy will be done," and "What wilt thou have me to do?" Christ is our example in this, for "He came not to do His own will, but the will of His Father. It is time that the mind of every true believer be turned towards the cause of Jesus Christ, which they love. They should look into their present employment, as well as their plans and purposes for the future. And if possible let every thing tend to glorify God, and advance his cause here on earth. One of the great difficulties at the present, is that Christians are so filled with the business and cares of life, that they can scercely spare time enough to serve the Lord—are so busy they cannot attend Conference Meeting—have not time to attend to any religious duties. They can find time to go abroad and attend to other matters. Yes, these things, of course, must be seen to. Christ says, "Seek first the kingdom," &c. But many reverse this matter and seek first their own goods and pleasure, and when they can find nothing else to do, may be will serve the Lord. They can build, can plant, and improve lands: very few who are satisfied without good, comfortable, and sometimes fine houses; and at the same time their church houses are old, and going down; where a congregation cannot be comfortable for one hour.—The reason generally is that, we have not time nor means to build the Lord's house. "Is it time, O ye, to dwell in

your ceiled houses, and this (my) house lie waste." Haggia 1, 4.

Dear brethren, read this entire prophecy and you will say, with me, it is no wonder that we suffer temporally and spiritually as we do. Our present troubles indicate that we have forsaken, to some extent, the service of the Lord; and He is manifesting His displeasure towards us. I believe our condition will grow worse still, unless we turn unto the Lord. I hope our people are becoming more alive to their duties, and that we may soon see a great change in our condition. Dear brethren, God has provided that we may do all our work and serve him too. Yes, we should be "diligent in business serving the Lord. Let us bring Jesus into all our work. Things do not seem to go on well; we are perplexed and troubled, and really it is no wonder, because we leave Jesus out of the question. How can it be otherwise and the Lord so little acknowledged? Brethren, let us change our plans, and bring Jesus into all our plans, duties, and circumstances. By no means be without a present Savior; for we may tell Him everything, and have Him for a constant companion. A heart thus consecrated to Jesus, and filled with His love, is indeed prepared for His service. Religion becomes a blessed reality to such, and is attractive to others also. If we devote ourselves to Christ in little matters, His public service will not be such a burden. We, like David, will be glad when it is said "Let us go into the house of the Lord.' Let us all consecrate ourselves a fresh to the Lord Jesus Christ, whose salvation is so dear to us all. In connection with the above read Matt. 6th chap., from 19th verse.

J. E. BELL.

Received of H. M. Bell, Clerk, $27,95 for printing 400 copies of this Minute.
SMITH & SANFORD.

STATISTICAL TABLE, 1874.

Churches.	Pastors.	Post Office.	Names of Delegates.	Sabbath Meetg's	Rec'd by Bapt'm	Rec'd by Letter	Restored	Dismissed by L.	Excluded	Dead	Total	Associa'l Fund	Minute Fund
Shady Grove,	J E Bell,	Fayette C H Ala	W F Kirkland, Willis Davis, G B Waldrop,	1	00	00	00	00	1	00	53	$1 00	$1 50
Mt. Pleasant,	J B Ferguson,	Handy, "	D G Kirkland, J W White, H Anderson,	3	00	00	00	6	00	00	52	1 00	1 50
Shepherd,	B V Shirley,	Fayette C H "	G W Gravlee, G J Collins,* J J Jones,	3	1	2	00	00	00	00	58	1 00	1 50
Chappel Hill,	J M Chism,	Cave Sprg's "	J F Ashcraft, S W Vice, W W Sanders,*	2	2	1	1	12	2	00	46	50	2 00
Pilgrims Rest,	B V Shirley,	Fayette C H "	E D Rushing, E G Horn, J N Walden,	2	3	2	00	7	1	1	86	50	2 00
New Bethel,	N J Dyer,	Newtonville "	F M Laboon,* J A Trim,* T J Fowler,*		3	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	1 00
Fayetteville,	J E Bell,	Fayette C H "	J E Bell, J C Jones, H M Bell,	3	3	00	00	1	00	00	32	2 25	1 50
Rocky Mount,	N J Dyer,	Newtonville "	B M Stillman, L Bobe,* G W Howton,*	4	00	00	00	3	00	00	23	25	75
Sardis,	J B Ferguson,	Handy, "	G W Lawrence, W G Baker, S Baker,	2	3	3	00	2	00	1	24	00	85
Concord,	J M Chism,		T H Davis, W B Melton, L C Shirley,	4	31	9	2	6	1	1	110	1 00	1 50
2d District,													
Philadelphia,	J B Ferguson,	Handy, "	J B Ferguson, W H Brasher, M L Parks,		2	6	00	00	00	00	20	50	1 00
Union,	J C Jones,	Fayette C H "	M Morris,* G McDonald, J S Holligsworth,	3	00	1	00	1	00	00	34	1 00	1 00
Mt. Zion,	E T Akins,	" "	E T Akins, W J Holmes, W J Akins,	4	27	3	3	7	00	00	71	1 00	1 50
Mt. Olive,	B V Shirley,	" "	B V Shirley, Avery Kidd, W B Shirley,	1	6	7	00	10	1	1	74	1 00	2 50
Mt. Joy,	J C Jones,	" "	J B Huckabee, Thomas Harris, S W Moss,		3	6	1	6	00	00	37	65	1 50
Hopewell,					00	00	00	00	00	00	00	50	1 25
Harmony Grove,	E L Westbrooks,		E L Westbrooks, J Chambliss* J M Spann,	1	5	4	00	00	00	00	82	00	1 20
Macedonia,	E T Akins,	Fayette C H "	A A Smith, L C Kelly, Wm M Tucker,*	2	8	6	1	2	00	00	00	95	2 00
Oak Grove,	E L Westbrooks,		C M Weeks, W B Long, W B Taylor,		8	11	00	2	00	00	26	25	80
Mt. Lebanon,	E T Akins,	Fayette C H "	J M Dodson, J W Dodson, J F Willis,	1	00	4	00	2	00	00	42	1 00	1 00

☞ Absentees marked thus, *

Ala. Central Female College,

TUSCALOOSA, ALA.

Seventeenth Session begins the 1st Wednesday in October, 1874.

FACULTY.—Ten experienced, skillful, earnest Teachers.

STUDIES.—Full course in English, Languages, Science.

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For Catalogue, Terms, etc., address,

JOHN F. LANNEAU, President,
Tuscaloosa, Alabama.